

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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INDIANA BLACK LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS MOURNS LOSS OF ROSA PARKS

INDIANAPOLIS—The Indiana Black Legislative Caucus issued the following statement concerning the death of civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks.

"The Indiana Black Legislative Caucus mourns the loss and celebrates the life of civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks who died of natural causes on Monday, October 24, 2005. Mrs. Parks, after a hard day's work, was arrested because she refused to give up her bus seat to a white man. At the age 42 Rosa Parks, seamstress and secretary of the local chapter of the NAACP, changed the course of American history by igniting a civil rights movement toward racial equality. In 1992 Mrs. Parks said: 'my feet were hurting and I didn't know why I refused to stand up. But the real reason of my not standing up was I felt that I had a right to be treated as any other passenger. We had endured that type of treatment for too long.'

"Her arrest started a 381-day boycott of the Alabama bus system. This movement culminated in the 1964 federal Civil Rights Act, which banned racial discrimination in public accommodations."

"We celebrate because Mrs. Parks, the matriarch of the civil rights movement, had enough courage and foresight to know on that day in 1955 was the time to stand up for civil inequities by sitting down. We celebrate because that was the beginning of a new era. Mrs. Parks' actions resulted in the beginning of a unified response to decades of intimidation and discrimination of the African American population. It was a beginning of a continuum of successful struggles.

"We mourn because yet another civil rights icon has been called to rest. It is a great loss but the spirit of Mrs. Rosa Parks will be with us throughout our continued struggles and our journey of hope.

"Those of us who remain on earth must fully embrace the concepts of eliminating the disparities in education, economics and healthcare. We must not be swayed away from the Civil Rights spirit."

